

C is for Chickenpox by lilies_in_a_vase

Series: [Lilies' Alphabet Soup of Pain \[3\]](#)

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Summary:

Billy finds out what it's like when you have friends that worry and care about you (while being slightly crazy). Oh, and he has a cat!

C is for Chickenpox

Author's Note:

I wrote the first half of this barely awake, and the rest at short intervals throughout the day. I had really fun writing it, and this is one of those fics that I've really looked forward to writing! I mean, I did get to bring forth the memories of me being a tiny little child with chickenpox and zero impulse control, and I hope I managed to harness that energy, haha!

A couple notes, in case it gets confusing: Billy, Robin, and Nancy are all seniors, Steve works full time at Family Video, where Robin works part-time, Max and the rest of the Party are freshmen, and Billy lives in Hopper's old trailer from Season 1.

Don't think there's anything to put triggers for, but if there is, please let me know!

Disclaimer:

I don't own "Stranger Things".

Billy's feeling like shit.

He's pretty sure he's got a fever, his body can't decide if it's too hot or too cold in the trailer, his head aches, and on top of that he's got a rash made out of itchy, fluid-leaking, tiny red bumps all over his body.

If it weren't for Jaimie - Dustin's housewarming gift when Billy moved into Hopper's old trailer as soon as he turned 18 and named after James Hetfield because he's basic like that - Billy probably

wouldn't have moved at all for the last three days.

But Jaimie needs to eat, and drink, and has a tendency to sit atop his head and tangle her paws into his curls until he does what she wants, and it's the only reason he's dragged himself to the sink for a glass of water.

She's a real bitch and he loves her with all his heart.

He'd called himself in sick three days ago and had counted it as luck that it was a Friday. Not that Billy thinks he's going to be anywhere *close* to well enough to go to school tomorrow, either, but he figures he'll deal with that when the time comes. Jaimie will force him up, or his bladder will, anyway.

Yesterday, Max spent a good portion of half an hour attempting to knock his door down, but Billy had just turned around, put one of his pillows over his head and ignored her. He couldn't deal with her whining. Or her worry.

(He loves her, really, he's just sick and *so. Fucking. Tired.*)

He should've probably expected something like this to happen, though.

Robin's banging on his door.

“Billy, for fuck’s sake! Open the door! I know you’re in there, the Camaro’s literally standing right outside! Open the goddamn door!”

Jaimie looks up at him, and Billy can tell she’s very displeased with this development, yes indeed, uh-huh, the Queen demands an end to the noise. Thankfully, she doesn’t at all mind when Billy’s blasting her namesake across the trailer, so. Perfection, truly.

“You and me both, girl,” Billy mutters.

Robin seems to have decided to change tactics, her knocks getting less angry although no less loud.

“Billy. Billy, please, open the door. I need to know you’re alive. Come on. You weren’t in school, and Steve said you sounded off when he called you-“

Ah, yes. That happened. Billy completely forgot.

Steve called him on Friday, around the time that Billy would’ve normally have gotten home from Hawkins High. He’s on a trip with his parents for two weeks, to ‘bond’ and ‘make up for lost time’ and ‘look if there are any colleges that might interest him’. Billy thinks that it’s mostly the last part that’s important for Mr and Mrs Harrington, although he hopes for Steve’s sake that he’s wrong.

“- and you hadn’t even told him you were sick, and Max went up to me at lunch and asked where the hell you were, and then she called

me earlier to tell me she'd been here yesterday and you wouldn't open the door, so please, *please*, open. Just so I know you're alive and okay. Come on?"

Billy doesn't make a move to stand up from his bed. Jaimie looks between him, the door, and back again. Billy thinks that if she had eyebrows, visible eyebrows that work like a humans, she'd probably have raised them by now. Billy sticks his tongue out at her. She licks her paw.

"Fuck you, Billy!" Robin calls. Oh, we're back to frustrated now. "Fuck you! I'm getting reinforcements! One way or another, I'm getting in there! You can't keep me out forever!"

The banging stops, and Billy hears the sound of her car starting up. He closes his eyes and falls asleep.

—

When he next opens them, there's a familiar weight on his head, and he suppresses a sigh.

"Last chance, Billy!"

Oh. Robin's back. Great.

“No? Fine! Go ahead.” She’s talking to someone else, muffled voices that he can’t quite make out. “Yes, I’m sure! Do it!”

Someone shoots his door.

With an actual firearm.

The sound is so loud it makes him flinch, makes Jaimie jump and one of her claws goes digging into his forehead when she lands, another paw pulling on his hair.

“Jesus fucking Christ!”

He hold his hands up, and Jaimie goes scrambling into his arms.

“Fifteen seconds Billy, or she’ll aim for the actual lock next time!”

Insane people.

Billy’s friends are crazy. All of them. What the fuck?

He stands up so quickly his legs go out, tangled in the duvet and blanket, and he crashes to the floor. Jaimie is thoughtful enough to

leap out of his embrace seconds before impact, so he just barely manages to bring his hands up catch himself before his face meets the floor. Jaimie walks over and licks the bridge of his nose.

“... seven... six... five...!”

“Fucking-!” He pulls his legs out from his cocoon of bedding, and scoops Jaimie up on the way to standing. He has to hold her with one arm once he reaches the door, wrenching it open with a shout of, “I swear to God, Robin!”

“He lives!” Robin exclaims, arms shooting up into the air.

Nancy stands beside her, shotgun in hand, and Billy really wishes this was just some weird dream conjured up by his sick and tired subconscious. Sadly, Billy’s friends are actual maniacs, and he has a hole in his front door.

“You’re going to pay for a new door, Rob, you hear me?”

Nancy frowns at him, before her eyes take on a look of clarity. “Have you been hanging out with Erica?”

Billy frowns. “I babysat her last week.” Mrs. Sinclair pays well and Erica likes him. Since they’re equally as bitchy, the two of them.

“Oh, Billy,” Nancy says, sympathetically. “You never had chickenpox

as a kid?”

Billy scowls, turning on his heel and marching back the few steps to his bed. “No,” he says. “I somehow managed to avoid that particular childhood rite of passage. But I’m alive, so you two can fuck off now, and leave us alone. You scared the cat.”

“Sorry, Jaimie!” Nancy calls, and to his horror, Billy can hear her voice getting closer. It’s accompanied by two sets of footsteps. Because of course it is.

“But if you think that we’re leaving you alone, you’ve got another thing coming,” Robin says, and yep, they’re in his kitchen now. Which is technically also his living room. And his bedroom.

Billy buries his face in Jaimie’s soft fur and groans. It’s a testament to how much Jaimie loves him back that she doesn’t immediately try to go away. She barely lets Steve pet her.

And, for what it’s worth, she barely lets Steve ‘pet’ Billy, either. Territorial little darling.

“Have you eaten at all?” Nancy asks.

“What, today?” Robin frowns, and Billy looks up to find both of them looking over his completely clean and empty kitchen counter and sink, save for the one half-full glass of water.

“This weekend,” Nancy clarifies.

Billy lets Jaimie fall down into his lap and strokes her. “No. To both.” He drags his fallen blanket off the floor and pulls it haphazardly over his back. He eyes the duvet, shivering, but doesn’t think he’s strong enough to drag it, too, up. This whole interaction has used up more of his energy than anything Billy’s done since Thursday evening. One of the bumps on his forearm itches, and Billy stops petting Jaimie in favour of scratching at it.

“I knew you shouldn’t be living alone, you absolute menace,” Robin says, turning around to look at him. Her eyes widen. “Hey!” she shouts, and lunges for him.

Jaimie jumps out of the way, up onto the coffee table. The coffee table is home to Billy’s TV, a couple books, and his currently abandoned homework.

“Jaimie!” Billy cries out, despairing at her leaving him to Robin’s mercy.

“Stop that!” Robin shouts, swatting at the hand that’s still scratching at his itchy skin.

Billy pouts. “But it itches.”

“I don’t care,” Robin says.

“It’s supposed to,” Nancy says. “Means some have started to heal. You’ll get scars if you scratch them, though.”

“I don’t care,” Billy says, mimicking Robin’s voice and meeting her gaze. She’s still sprawled halfway in his lap and halfway on his bed and her eyes narrow in return. “I’ve got so many you won’t even be able to tell they’re there.”

“You’ll get an infection,” Nancy says.

“They’ll have to amputate a limb,” Robin adds.

“Fuck off,” Billy responds.

“Meow,” Jaimie finishes. She wanders over and climbs back into Billy’s lap, taking the path that includes her putting her paws on Robin’s back, shoulder, neck, and cheek.

“There we go, my sweet little angel,” Billy coos. “Knew you wouldn’t abandon me.”

“A fallen angel, maybe,” Robin says, opening her mouth and attempting to splutter out cat hairs.

Billy pulls Jaimie close to his chest. “Hey! You’re a lesbian, aren’t you supposed to like kitties?”

“Fuck you.”

“She’s a Queen.”

“You spoil her.”

From the kitchen counter, Nancy laughs, and Billy looks up to see she’s got a pot on the stove.

“The hell you doing with my kitchen?”

She holds up a bag that Billy didn’t even see her bring in. He realises he doesn’t know where the shotgun went, but trusts Nancy enough to figure she must’ve put it somewhere responsible. “You think we would come visit our sick friend empty handed?”

“I think you would come to harass him.”

“We were worried,” Nancy says, turning back around and stirring whatever it is she’s cooking.

Robin pokes his cheek. “Yeah, Billy. We were worried. And not only

that, but we were sent by the two people who can become the scariest people on this planet when they are worried about you, in particular.”

“Well, she was,” Nancy says. “I’m just here as the firepower.”

“Literally,” both Billy and Robin mutter in synch. They glance at each other afterwards, and Billy feels a smile pulling at his lips as Nancy laughs.

“Just let us take care of you,” Robin says, quieter and more gentle than she’s been all day.

“I’m cold,” Billy whispers in response, and Robin immediately pushes her palm against his forehead.

“You’ve definitely got a fever.”

“Thank you, I know.”

“You’re welcome, and shut up.” She wrinkles her nose. “You stink.”

“I haven’t showered since Thursday.”

If possible, her nose screws up even further. She looks a bit like

Jaimie when she's displeased with him. "I can tell. You need to shower. Can I trust you not to scratch at your skin or do I need to sit on your toilet lid and keep watch?"

"I don't want to shower."

"Tough. You're going to. You'll feel better."

"You're not seeing me naked."

Robin's expression starts off as disgust - which, ow, he may have Mindflayer scars all over his torso but he's still hot - and settles on complete indifference and utter disbelief. "I don't give a shit about what you look like naked. Nothing," she says, gesturing at him, which is a little hard to do as she's still basically lying in his lap. "That you've got does anything at all for me. It be like... like staring at a specimen in a biology textbook. Or a statue."

Billy grins. "You're right. I could have been sculpted out of marble."

Nancy chokes on a laugh. "Oh my God," she says, and turns around, dragging Robin off of him. She holds her hand out to Billy once Robin's up and standing, and Billy takes it, letting her pull him to his feet. She shoos at him, turning him towards his bathroom. "Go. Shower. Be out in fifteen or I'm sending in Robin."

Robin's right, although Billy is a little loath to admit it. The water feels really nice. Soothing on his itchy skin and it's nice to get out

three days worth of dried fever sweat and cat hairs.

He can't really keep himself from scrubbing extra hard on some of the most itchy spots though.

He thinks he stays there for about ten minutes, Nancy's warning loud in his ears, and he'll need a couple minutes to towel off before he steps out. Can't let himself air dry when he's got company. Not to mention that the stark difference in temperature from the inside to ten outside of the shower is making him shiver again.

But then, he realises that as he was ushered in here against his will, with his mind slow due to Erica Sinclair giving him goddamn chickenpox, Billy forget to bring clothes to change into. He nudges the dirty pile of laundry on the floor next to his washing machine but putting it on would probably defeat the purpose of showering in the first place.

"Billy?" Robin's voice comes from the other side of the door. "Open the door."

"Not this shit again Robin," Billy groans. Other than the very logical PTSD he's already got from this summer and a lifetime with his dad, he figures that phrase, coming out of her mouth, will forever be ingrained in his mind with the combination of a gunshot and cat claws scratching his forehead.

Robin, the witch, laughs. "I've got clothes, dummy."

Billy tightens the grip he's got on his towel, wrapped around his waist, and opens the door. "My saviour." He takes the offered clothing and looks through it. Soft cotton pyjama pants - a gift from Ms. Byers - and his favourite pair of socks - made by Ms. Henderson - and a soft, long sleeved green shirt - stolen from Steve - and... "Did you go through my underwear?"

Robin rolls her eyes. "Well, you had to get a clean pair. And it's not like you've got anything to hide, living alone. Nancy found the condoms and lube in a kitchen drawer."

"That's what you get for going through someone else's home."

"Yeah, well-" Billy moves his arm, changing his grip on the towel and Robin's eyes follow the movement, widening. "Billy! You promised you wouldn't scratch-!"

He closes the door in her face, almost slipping on the floor in his hurry to lock it. "I did no such thing!" he shouts through it.

"You little shit!" Robin shouts back, and then she's gone, stepping away.

Billy dresses himself quickly, stepping out of the bathroom a little apprehensively.

"Ta-da!" Robin shouts, and oh, wow.

They've changed his bedding, got clean sheets, and the trailer smells less like sickness and more like fresh air so they must've kept a window open while he showered - or perhaps that is just coming through the hole in his front door, although, wait a minute... They've boarded the hole closed with some spare plywood Hop left lying around in the 'backyard'. Robin's got a pile of movies stacked up on his coffee table, and on Billy's tiny little kitchen table, just big enough for two people, Nancy's placed a bowl of soup. Jaimie sits on the TV, overlooking it all. She seems very happy.

"You do love me!" Billy says, and Nancy appears at his side, standing on her tiptoes in order to reach up and throw a blanket across his shoulders.

"That's what I've been trying to tell you!" Robin says, walking over to his freezer.

"You're going to eat your soup," Nancy says, pushing him down into a chair. "And then we're going to watch movies and eat ice cream."

The soup is hot and really good and fills him with warmth and Billy tells Nancy as much. Jaimie moves from the TV to sit on the table in front of him and stare at him. He thinks she looks satisfied.

"You got a... big bowl, or something?" Robin shouts, and Billy turns in his seat to see she's stuck halfway inside his cupboard.

"It's on the left," Billy says. "Ms. Henderson's been teaching me how

to bake, so if you see a bunch of baking shit, it's right there." Billy knows how to make cupcakes now. He's getting soft.

He can't say he minds.

"Found it!" Robin exclaims, immediately followed by a thud, and a groan.

Billy smirks into his soup and meets Nancy's gaze. "Did she knock her head into the cupboard?"

Nancy grins, nodding. "She did, yeah."

Billy's almost certain that Jaimie, too, is amused.

"Right," Robin says. "You finished with the soup?"

"Yep," Billy says, popping the 'p'.

Nancy takes the bowl, coming back with a glass of water and a pill. "For your fever," she says, and then, lowering her voice so Robin can't hear, "I'm really sorry, Billy." She goes over to his bed and starts going through the movies.

"What? Why?" Billy says, staring after her.

She muffles a laugh and Billy doesn't think he wants to know. "Take your meds," she says, so Billy does, sharing a glance with Jaimie.

When he turns back around, Robin's come up to him, holding out a pair of oven mitts.

"No," Billy says, looking up at her and trying to make his expression innocent, his eyes begging. "Robin."

"That expression only works on Steve and our mothers. I am neither Steve nor a mother."

"You sure about that?"

"Fuck you. You can't be trusted."

"I hate you."

"I thought we'd established we all love each other?" Nancy calls.

"I'm a multilayered being. I can hold two thoughts," Billy responds, then, to Robin, "You can't be serious."

“Deathly. Put the mitts on, Billy.”

“No.”

“Hey, you guys want to watch *Indiana Jones*, *The Breakfast Club*, or *Footloose*?” Nancy asks.

“*Indiana Jones*,” Robin answers. “Steve told me Billy thought he was hot.”

“Everyone thinks Harrison Ford is hot,” Billy defends.

“No,” Robin says.

“Yes,” Nancy sighs dreamily.

“The mitts, Billy. Now.”

“Robin-“

“Listen, on a normal day, yeah, you could probably take us, but today, you’re sick, there’s two of us, and Nancy’s got a shotgun.”

“And I’m not afraid to use it!”

“I think my door’s proof of that,” Billy groans, and holds out his hands. It’s one thing to give in to Robin, and it’s another thing to help her in embarrassing him.

She smiles, though, and pulls the mitts on his hands.

Billy turns to look at Jaimie, raising his eyebrows. “You’re not going to help? I’m being manhandled here.”

“It’s for your own good,” Robin mutters, and then drags him up to standing. Jaimie takes a leap into his arms.

“And how, exactly, did you think that I was going to be able to eat ice cream with these on?” Billy asks.

Robin turns her back to him, going over to his kitchen counter. When she turns back around, she’s triumphantly holding up one of those big spoons that he uses for cooking. “Here you go,” she says, offering it to him like he’s Cinderella and she’s the prince with the glass shoe.

It’s so silly, so irritatingly endearing that Billy can’t help the laugh that bubbles out of his chest. Robin shares a look with Nancy, and then they, too, laugh.

Nancy scoots to the side on his bed, patting the seat next to her. Billy

walks over and falls down, curling up with his blanket and cat. Robin plops the big bowl she'd been on the hunt for earlier on his lap and sits down on his other side.

It's filled with at least one and a half cartons of ice cream. She hands Nancy a spoon - normal sized - and takes one for herself. She digs in while Nancy starts the movie, and Jaimie wiggles out from Billy's lap and over to Robin, pressing herself against her and purring.

"Aw, look at that!" Nancy says. "She's glad you saved her dad from himself."

"Hey!"

"I'm right and you know it, Billy."

"Steve's going to be so jealous," Robin laughs. She lets go off the spoon and scoops Jaimie up in her arms, touching her nose to her face. Jaimie licks her.

Billy stares at them, trying to get eye contact with Jaimie. "You traitor."

Jaimie only looks at him for a second, and then nuzzles closer to Robin in response.

"And you," Billy turns on Robin. "I thought you didn't like her?"

“Great recognises great,” she says, not bothering to even look at him. Nancy must find it all very funny at least, because she laughs and leans her head on Billy’s shoulder. “It just took us a little while to warm up to each other.”

“Jesus.”

“I don’t think he had anything to do with it,” Nancy says, Robin laughing. She holds up her hand for a high five, Nancy giddily returning it, right in front of Billy’s face.

He sighs, turning back to the TV. He’s already seen it, but, still, “We’re missing the movie.”

Mercifully, that gets the other two to quiet down. He’s not ashamed to say that half an hour later, Billy falls asleep.

—

Robin appears on Monday morning.

“Don’t you have school?” Billy asks, frowning and staring at her where she stands in his doorway.

“I mean, technically, so do you.”

He rolls his eyes and immediately regrets it when it makes his headache worse. “Yeah, but I’m sick.”

“And I managed to convince my parents, who convinced the school, that you’re shit at taking care of yourself and live alone, so. Nancy’s coming by after school, with work for me - and you if you feel up for it- to do that we’ve missed. And then tomorrow, she’s staying here, and I’m going to school.”

“You’re taking shifts,” Billy realises. “You’re taking shifts to take care of me.”

“Yes.”

“Fucking hell, Rob.”

—

When Billy leaves the bathroom on Friday, it’s to the sound of knocking at the front door. He’s expecting Robin.

Instead, Jonathan stands there, waiting for him to open.

Billy raises his eyebrows. "They roped you into babysitting duty as well?"

"You call yourself a baby?" Jonathan asks, and Billy smirks, turning on his heel and walking back to bed.

"That's what Steve calls me." He lies down on his bed, staring up at the ceiling.

Jonathan chokes on a laugh. "The school didn't want Robin to miss a third day," he explains, closing the door behind him as he steps inside. You've got a headache or are you good enough to listen to music? I picked up some new stuff I think you might like."

Billy grins, Jaimie settling down on his belly, and points at his cassette player. "But on the tapes, Johnny boy."

Author's Note:

I hope you guys liked it!